

# **SELF-PROTECTION**

## **Compiled by United Martial Arts**

Self-defense techniques are good to know, but for the most part, it takes a long time to develop them into useable skills. However, they are not substitutes for common sense, alertness and caution. The best self-defense is to practice self-protection, that is, to avoid being the victim of an attack or robbery.

### **I. HOME**

#### **A. DOORS**

- 1) Have all outside locks changed when moving into a new house or apartment. There may lots of duplicate keys of your door locks out there somewhere.
- 2) Install and use dead bolt locks.
- 3) Don't be generous with duplicate keys.
- 4) Install a peephole, or even a remote video system (available at most home improvement stores).
- 5) Never hide keys under the mat, in the mailbox, in planters, in fake rocks, etc. These locations are easily found and may help someone gain entry into your home.
- 6) Never leave house keys on your key chain while your vehicle is being repaired, or at a jiffy lube or car wash.
- 7) Don't rely on a chain lock for security. They are usually attached to the molding of the door and are easily forced open.
- 8) Always lock your doors when you are in the home and when you leave.
- 9) If you ever come home, and sense or find, that someone entered your home, DO NOT ENTER! Go to a neighbor's house, phone the police, and allow them to check your home for intruders.
- 10) Install an alarm system if possible. This will help deter attackers and burglars, and will give you a better sense of security.
- 11) Consider metal door-frames, which greatly lessen the chances of forced door entry.
- 12) Sliding glass doors generally have minimal security when it comes to locking them. Cut a broomstick or piece of dowel rod to size, and place it in the slide track on the floor between the sliding door and the facing, This will help prevent the door being opened.
- 13) Glass doors (or wood doors with glass in them offer little security. Think about replacing them with solid exterior doors,
- 14) Don't let people in when you're alone, or open the door to them, especially if you don't know them.
- 15) Place a foot at the base of the door while answering the door.

#### **B. WINDOWS**

- 1) Keep all of your windows locked.
- 2) Make sure to have security system coverage on your windows, either contact sensor or glass break device.
- 3) If you use mini blinds, consider hanging curtains on the outside of them to prevent someone from seeing in.
- 4) If you use just curtains, consider using heavy curtains that can't be seen through. This will help prevent anyone from seeing in your windows.
- 5) Draw your shades and/or curtains at night before changing clothes or going to bed.
- 6) Never dress or undress in front of windows. This is a good way to invite problems.
- 7) Installing of storm windows adds extra security by making entry harder to gain entry through the windows. In today's world most houses are built with triple pain windows and you do not need storm windows for the weather, as was the case in the past.



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- 8) For windows, a broomstick handle or dowel rod cut to fit and placed between the top of the window and the top lip of the windowsill will help prevent entry through windows.
- 9) Window unit air conditioners and water coolers should be securely attached to the window frames to prevent their removal to gain entry.
- 10) Consider using track locks on your windows.

## C. TELEPHONE

- 1) List your name in the phone book so people won't know you live alone.
- 2) Never volunteer information to any caller over the phone (strangers, credit card companies, etc).
- 3) Never give the impression that you are home alone.
- 4) It's the caller's place to identify the number and whom they are calling.
- 5) Have emergency numbers such as the police, ambulance, fire department and a reliable neighbor that lives close by put on speed dial or have the numbers close by your phone. In areas where it is available use 911 for the police, ambulance and fire department.
- 6) Train yourself and your children to say you can't come to the phone right now, or that you are too busy right now, and if they'll leave their name and number, you can call them back.
- 7) Use caller ID to help identify a caller, and aid in your decision to take a call. Caller ID's can now be manipulated to say whatever the caller (the bad guys) wants it to say.
- 8) Don't answer "blocked," or other unidentified calls. If someone doesn't want you to know who he or she is, maybe you should not take the call.
- 9) Be careful not to volunteer any information when making messages on your answering machine or call notes system. Consider using just your phone number and ask them to leave a message.

## D. EXTERIOR OF THE HOME

- 1) Install adequate outdoor lighting, such as security or floodlights to low lit areas.
- 2) Apply security system or security company decals in plan view on exterior doors and windows (whether or not you have the security system!).
- 3) Don't allow bushes or shrubs to go un-maintained. This could provide concealment for attackers or robbers. The placement of ornamental lights around bushes and shrubs lessen the concealment factor, and can help in preventing a person from hiding in these areas.
- 4) Have your lawn mowed while you are away on long trips.
- 5) Have someone pick up your mail and newspapers, or have delivery stopped, or sent to another location when you are away on long trips.
- 6) Purchase an automatic light timer when away from home at night, or on long trips.
- 7) Notify your local police department, if you are going on a long trip, they'll check on your house.
- 8) Never leave notes on your door.

## II. WHEN OUT

### A. GENERAL

- 1) Avoid going out alone, especially at night. Bring along your spouse, a relative or a friend.
- 2) Wear modest clothing. Don't wear provocative or tight clothing (so you can move fast).
- 3) Stick to well lighted areas you are familiar with.



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- 4) Carry only a small amount of cash when you go out. If robbed money will be gone, but you can always stop payment on checks, and cancel credit cards and bankcards.
- 5) Hold you purse in your hand and if a shoulder purse, also put it over the opposite shoulder. Consider using a fanny pack which is easier to carry and more secure than a purse.
- 6) If you are being followed, or suspect that you are, cross the street, change your direction, alter you pace, and head toward lights and people. If the person is still following you call 911. If being followed in or near a store or public place, go in to customer service and ask for help.
- 7) Don't carry a weapon unless you're highly trained in its use. Many people hurt in attacks, are hurt by a weapon taken away from them by the attacker.
- 8) If you choose to carry a weapon, don't let other people know you have it, or where you keep it at home.
- 9) Carry a police whistle. Place it on your key chain and have it out ready to use. It will do you no good having it in your purse.
- 10) In areas where it's legal to carry, it is not a bad idea to carry mace as a substitute for a whistle. People react differently to mace. You should expect to slow down your attacker, not neutralize him or her. Again, it needs to be in your hand ready to use, not in your purse.
- 11) Be alert; treat every situation as a possible attack. Remember, 65% of rapists had some prior contact with the victim. This includes friends, co-workers, relatives, customer, client, etc.).

## B. CAR

- 1) Always lock your doors once inside the vehicle, as well as, when you get out.
- 2) Be alert when stopped. If your vehicle is approached, drive away.
- 3) Never pick up hitchhikers, you are only asking for trouble.
- 4) If someone is following you drive to the nearest police station or well populated business. Avoid driving home until you're certain that you are no longer being followed.
- 5) Always park in well-lighted areas. This will help you observe any suspicious activity.
- 6) Park as close to store entry as possible. If possible back in so you are ready to leave.
- 7) Have your keys in your hand and ready for your car or house so you can make a quick entry.
- 8) Your keys can be used as a weapon.
- 9) Remember, it's a good idea to carry a whistle on your key chain, so it will be ready to use.
- 10) When walking towards your vehicle check under the car. Attacker have been know to lie under cars and wait until the driver starts to enter the vehicle, then using a knife cuts the achilles tendon. The victim will then be unable to walk, much less run, and is then robbed or otherwise attacked.
- 11) Always look in the back seat before getting in your car.
- 12) Try not to let your vehicle fall below ¼ tank of fuel. You'll be less likely stranded in a dangerous place.
- 13) If you have car trouble, put the hood up, get back in your car, and lock the doors. Call 911 if possible. Through a crack in the window, tell anyone who stops to call for help. Carry a sunshade that says: "Please Call Police" and put it in your window.
- 14) You can press your car alarm when threatened, even if you are in the house and car in the garage. Keep your car keys on your bed stand when you go to bed.



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### **C. ELEVATORS**

- 1) When by yourself, don't get on an elevator with strangers.
- 2) Try to ride with someone you know.
- 3) Wait on another elevator, if it's not going your direction.
- 4) Stand in a corner or against a wall.

### **II. OTHER**

- 1) Get to know your neighbors! They can be a resource for you in a frightening moment. They can give you emergency place to hang out, call 911 for you, or even notice when something is "not right" at your place.
- 2) When traveling your usual routes by car or by foot, make it a point to spot places of refuge, you can duck into should there ever be trouble on the way.
- 3) It's a good idea to vary your travel routes by car and by foot. Don't become predictable.
- 4) Running or walking with ear buds limits your ability to scan your environment and detect a threat. Running with your head down and your eyes glued to the ground in front of your feet also limits your field of perception. Lifting your head will not only improve your safety, it will help your breathing and posture. Leave one ear free to hear what is happening around you.
- 5) Don't text or talk on your phone while you're walking. Pay attention to your surroundings.
- 6) Always keep your mobile phone handy at all times. This will allow you to call for help if needed.
- 7) Go around with an air of confidence (not cocky). Act like you have a purpose. Look people in the eye as you pass them.
- 8) Crooks read the paper looking for opportunities when no one will be home, such as funerals. Leave someone to guard the house of the deceased and other relatives listed in the paper.
- 10) Be careful what information you put on face-book, twitter or any other social media. It might be used like #8 above or in other ways.

### **II. IF ATTACKED**

- 1) Every situation is different. Be prepared for anything. Expect the unexpected.
- 2) Screaming or blowing a whistle makes noise and an attacker does not to attract attention. The most attention is obtained by yelling "FIRE", rather than help.
- 3) Use psychology – it could be worth trying to talk the attacker out of attacking you.
- 4) What about self-defense techniques? They are OK, but it takes time to learn them well and constant practice for you to be able to rely on them.
- 5) A cup of coffee, an ink pen or pencil, a shoe, a hand full of coins, sand or pebbles, even a Diet Coke can all be emergency weapons to throw in an attacker's face or used against him. Go for the eyes or throat, then scream and run toward people and a well-lit area.
- 6) Create space. Try to keep something (table, pole, etc.) between you and the attacker.
- 7) If attacker is attempting to rape you, urinate or throw-up, he doesn't want a messy victim.

This is not a complete list, but a place to start. Take this list and add to it. You have our permission to use any of this material. Also remember, technology changes and so should our approach to self-protection. It is better to avoid a confrontation with an attacker rather than to have to deal with an attack later.

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